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THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Man making is the most divine of all arts. When we consider how old an art the art of teaching is, we are surprised that the idea of special training for teachers is of so comparatively recent a birth. Its growth and progress finally, if not its birth, has been due to a changed conception of life and its possibilities, and hence a wonderful increase in the respect in which education is held; a strengthening of faith in its efficacy to give greater happiness and a higher life to the individual and the race. It is only within the memory of men of our own generation that the static conception of life, which held sway for so many centuries, has given way to the dynamic conception. This change has formulated itself in emphasizing the idea of development as applied to the life of the individual, and the idea of evolution as applied to life in its entirety.

This idea of development, this dynamic solution of life, has entered into thought on education and revolutionized it. The mere concept of development, as applied only to the lifetime of an individual, was not a new one in the field of education. Any simpleton who has lived a score of years can see that he has developed. Many thinkers had shown that infancy, youth, and manhood are related organically, but it was the relating of individual development to generations and æons of the past, and later the discovery that the individual in his own development strides in haste through the race-stages of growth, that gave to the idea of development a new lease of life,—an immortality, perhaps. Certainly as an all-embracing concept, it stands today without a rival. The development of the individual, seen in the light of race development, gained an importance in possibility not dreamed of before, and gives to education as a molding and forming of men a recognition which education, as the mere

imparting of information, had never, and could never attain Education has passed from memory-cramming into man-making and the teacher has passed from a drill-master into a Prometheus a maker of men; from a day laborer into an artist. It becomes more and more evident that to do his work well demands special skill and careful preparation.

Can anyone question whether the man who is to hold such a place needs special preparation for his work? He who denies it must confess that by his very denial he condemns education itself. No man can consistently assert his faith in education as a power to make better men, better citizens, better physicians, better lawyers, better clergymen, and deny its power to make better teachers. Any reasonable conception of education carries this in itself as the plainest of corollaries.

Yet while the necessity for training teachers for grammar and primary schools is recognized by all, unfortunately it is not so recognized in the case of the high school and college. Here the old conception that anyone is fitted to teach if he knows his subject, that knowledge makes the teacher, is intrenched in its strongest fastness. The public who have been wont to bow with deep respect to the college graduate, and with only indifference to this same college graduate, tyrant of a crew of boys and girls, is apathetic and unobserving. The mass of high-school teachers, never having known the benefit of a special training themselves, never having themselves been able, unaided, to shake off the mere knowledge-cramming conception of education, look with coldness or indifference upon this innovation which threatens to revolutionize their empiric reign; but the logical necessity of the purpose, the analogy of the lower schools, the example of Germany and France, far ahead in this regard, are fast destroying the conception that mere knowledge alone, however abundant it may be, makes a good teacher. And our high schools, not many years hence, will refuse to accept untrained teachers.

Let us for a moment consider the work of the secondary school and observe if, while teachers are trained for other

schools, the secondary school has any special ground for exemption. Let us examine it in the light of that highest conception of education, which contains, in itself in unity, both knowledge and development. The high school period of the life of the child falls usually between the fourteenth and the eighteenth years of age. There is no period of development in the life of the child, save that of the first few years, which can for a moment compare with this in meaning for the child. It is the second birth. It is the birth of the *ego*. The emotions just now transient, coming and going like summer showers, become full and persistent, welling up from a depth of the soul unknown to the child before. They begin their amalgamation into a character. The child, before supple, pliant, yielding easily in judgment, even though rebellious in act, demands for himself the right of judging. Body and mind alike show awkward and unexpected fits of growth. As the babe in the cradle explores his limbs and reaches for his toes, and crows to find them his, and by the senses unites himself in all his parts into a body corporate, so now the youth explores himself in his intellectual and moral nature. He never knew before that there was as much of him as there really is. He is awkward in his new possessions, self-conscious, abashed. His brain fails to coördinate his muscles as it was wont a few years ago. He cannot walk, he cannot speak, he cannot think, without walking, speaking and thinking being conscious walking, speaking and thinking. How shall he do this? Why shall he do that? No such question ever came to him before. It is the age when life begins to make its great decisions. That face so smooth and childlike now begins to be marked with the hieroglyphics of character. Hercules is at the crossroads. Who shall help him to decide? This is the time when the self-centering thought of the child turns to altruism. He yearns to sacrifice himself for something true, something noble, something grand. Life reaches out to the stars for him. He sees himself walk the milky-way of greatness with the gods. He never will value his life more highly than now; never will be more ready to sacrifice it to nobility and truth than now.

Who is the man who shall guide this fiery untamed spirit? Who shall watch the opportunity which, once passed, shall be gone forever? Shall he be a quack, an empiric, whose empiricism even has had the growth of only a few years? Or shall he be a man whose mind is stored with all that the generations have learned as to life and its growth, whose eye is quick to see the expected opportunity for which it is ever watching; quick to see, ready to act; an expert trained by careful training? Now is your opportunity if you would be men-makers.

In this architecture of man the work done by the secondary school must of necessity be divided among specialists. As the pupil advances in knowledge the shortness of human life and the limitations of the human mind forbid that one man should be a teacher in many branches of learning. Now the stone-cutter can hew out the keystone for a portal, and never know where that portal is to be; whether beneath it a devout people is to pass to worship at the hour of prayer, or it is to look down upon men hurrying for gain into a mart of trade, and yet it may be a perfect keystone, well hewn, exactly fitting in its place, and fulfilling the plan of the master builder. A man may cut with precision the delicate teeth of a watch wheel. With his eye upon the pattern he may never err. And when his wheel is fitted with the wheels made by other hands, there may result the marvelous harmony of the exact watch. With man-building in the schools it is not so. The teacher must have a broad view of the whole in the light of which he shall do his special work. Else the whole work must be in the dark, and alas! a thing of darkness. In this darkness we have built men with all sorts of deformities; men whose lives will always be narrow, running upon close-set narrow grooves; without radiating lines, or even broad parallels of thought; stiff-necked men who cannot turn their heads to right or left without a mental revolution; men who never know that the horizon is a circle and melts into itself at either end; men who with a queer penetrating roll of the eyeball see only Latin grammar paradigms or can only count the petals of a rose; see only its mathematics, and be blind to its

beauty; or men with mathematical eyes, and language eyes, and science eyes, instead of men with eyes of deepest depths in which all God's universe may be reflected. The highest education is a matter of establishing relations. That teacher who has never viewed the whole can ill help to spin these cobweb threads of relations, finer than the microscopic nerve tracts lost in the labyrinth of the brain. Correlate! How can he correlate who has never dreamed of such an art? Man-building! How can he build a man who has never bent his brow, perhaps for a single hour, over the problem of what a man should be, and how he can be made to become what he should become?

But the secondary school not only requires teachers who view widely the ends of education, rising in a hierarchy to that highest architectonic end—moral character, but it requires teachers who are fully conversant with the methods and spirit of the schools below the high school. As long as education was likened by simile to the erection of a stately building, where the higher simply rests upon the lower, the necessity of this knowledge was obscured. But when we take the true figure, that of a growing organism, when we recognize that development comes only by the expansion of the old, that the new is only acquired by being organically connected with the old, then it is imperative to know what the old is, to study the contents of pupils' minds on entering a secondary school, as well as on entering a primary school. And not to study simply the what, but to study the relations, the organic potentiality of what the pupil already possesses, or already is. This is specially true of the beginning of the secondary school, where, unless the teacher is wise, there is like to come a break, which shall destroy the continuity so essential to the highest education.

Thus, upon at least three counts, the training of secondary school-teachers is fully as imperative as the training of teachers for the lower schools—the peculiar and important character of the changes which at that time of life develop in the pupil; the necessity of greater specialization in work, which demands that the specialist shall see his own work in its proper relation; and

third, the field of earlier education with which the teacher in the secondary school should be familiar.

If we grant, then, the necessity for training teachers in the secondary schools, we must consider the practical question: In what does the training proper for a secondary teacher consist? Few of us would feel competent to answer this question. Only the novice would be willing to answer it off-hand. To us as teachers who have gained the art by laborious practice, united with what often seems inspiration, the question is one of doubt and perplexity. We feel ourselves inclined to say with Topsy that we have just growed. The how is so dominated by the element of time, that it seems impossible to eliminate it and shorten those years into months, and yet that is what training should do. It should point out the diagonal where we have laboriously toiled around the sides. It should condense experience without diminishing its strength or sweetness. Trial alone can fully solve the problem. We may however be able to set forth a few general principles which shall meet with the approval of all, and serve as points of starting for a concrete realization of our hopes.

The story is that Socrates first met Xenophon in a narrow lane, and putting forth his staff stopped him. "Tell me," began Socrates, "Where does a man buy meal?" "In the market place," was the answer. "And oil?" "In the same place." "But where does one go to become wise?" The youth was silent. "Follow me," said the sage, "and I will tell you." The greatest educative force is individuality. No influence can equal that which comes from master upon disciple, and, as it is the true man alone who can be the true teacher, so the first requisite in the teacher is himself to be a man, and the first principle which should dominate all training of teachers is to cultivate freedom in the individuality. This has been the weak point of the normal training of the past; method, method, but no man behind the method. Machine methods of teaching can only make machine scholars. They sap the vitality of teachers and pupils alike. And yet method is indispensable to all success, but only living

method, and in the hands of the man who has assimilated it, made it his own, put his own life into it.

"The meaning of life here on earth" says Carlyle, "might be defined as consisting in this: To unfold yourself to work what thing you have a faculty for. It is a necessity for the human being, the first law of our existence." A slave can do only a slave's work, and there are no chains so debasing as spiritual chains. This freedom, however, does not mean license, but only this, that the mind of the teacher shall always be kept upon the end and not be spell-bound in contemplating the means. The best way to hit a mark is to fix the eye upon that and not upon the muscles which move the arm. This principle of individuality is the lens through which we should look at all other devices. It is the die which alone should stamp the pure gold of genuine teaching.

The first principle, then, for the guidance in training is the sacredness of *individuality*. The second is the broad *point of view*, —to open to the teacher the problem of education, both in its wide sense of the end, and its narrow sense of method in separate studies. He must learn the problem of education, first spelling out the words, tracing the line with slow moving finger, then stating it in algebraic terms. The solution no man knows. It is far more important that the young teacher should have a clear view of what the problem is than that he should reverence any man's solution. This familiarity can be acquired only by a study of the history of education. He must think the thoughts of the great thinkers of education, the thoughts of Plato, of Aristotle, of Rousseau, of Pestalozzi, of Herbart, of Mann; think them and make them his own, striving to rise upon them as stepping stones to a truer solution of the problem than they have reached. He must clash with them, contend with them, wrestle with them, until they are his. It is a lamentable fact that in our varied discussions of educational questions so little is to be heard of reference to the history of education; what men have already done; where succeeded, where failed. No wonder that the same mistakes are repeated by generation after generation of thinkers.

When the torch of history sheds no light upon the present there can be little progress.

This broad point of view must be aimed at, not only in the comprehensive questions of education, but also in the narrower questions of method. Here there must be a knowledge of the problem in all the fundamental studies of the secondary school. It is not enough that he be grounded in one or two merely. He cannot know one properly without knowing the principle of all, though his work must be intensive in a narrower field. The long discussion of the question of English has made plain what in a larger or smaller sense is true of every study, that it is indissolubly linked with every other study, and that, storm against concentration in the Herbartian sense as we will, concentration is upon us; not an exotic transplanted from the jungle growth of German philosophy, but a concentration of indigenous growth, native to hard-headed practical New England.

The third principle is the principle of *continuity*. The young teacher must learn that the work of education is a continuous one; that it begins with the cradle; and above all, that, in the early years of the child, the problem is presented in a form best for the learning and observation of the future teacher. Thanks to the labors of the pioneer reformers, to the martyrs for popular education, the work of the primary schools has been put in a position where it may serve as a model for teachers of all grades. These men were saturated with the true love of humanity. When it is the prayer of every teacher that the mantle of these Elijahs shall fall upon him, when every teacher shall bow in reverence and love before the little child set in their midst, then will come a millennium. Its rosy-fingered dawn has already touched the sky, the herald of brighter day. And so I would say, send your teachers for the secondary schools to the kindergarten; let them give close attention to the early work in the primary schools. There they may see teaching free from all temptation to pedantry, without the possibility of rivalry between teacher and taught, teaching in which the knowledge of the teacher so far passes the knowledge of the pupil that the how of method may reign supreme.

But whatever the training upon the side of knowing, there must be the richest of training on the side of doing. This training must not consist of a lesson here and there, but there must be continuous work with classes covering long intervals of time, that the teacher may learn to have that grip upon subject and class which is the mark of the successful teacher. The student-teacher must go into his class room alone with his class and shut the door. Such an experiment in training teachers by practice has been conducted for two years past in the Providence High School and has met with success, as far as can be judged in so short a time. Eight student-teachers were in training each year and ten have been appointed for next year. These student-teachers are college graduates who have taken the course in pedagogy at Brown during the previous year; a course of three hours a week, covering a study of the history, theory, and practice of education. These student-teachers, who are at the same time pursuing a graduate course in pedagogy at Brown, are assigned to half-time work in the high school and receive half pay for their services. Each is assigned full control of classes in at least two branches of study. To the pupil they stand in exactly the same relation as fully qualified teachers, but behind the scenes they are assigned to the special supervision and guidance of supervising-teachers, who, in general, are the heads of departments. They are assigned classes which are doing work parallel to that of some experienced teacher, who sets the pace for their movements and serves as a guiding example. Each supervising-teacher meets in conference once a week the student-teachers in his department, and as each student-teacher is assigned to at least two departments, he will have two conferences each week; these are informal meetings, and are the summing up of the experiences and observations of the week. Besides this there is a meeting once a week, when the threads of the work are gathered together by the director of the training department, who is also professor of pedagogy in Brown University. Once a week there is a seminary in methods, led by the supervising teachers of the different departments, at which

all the student-teachers are present, and as preparation for which a large amount of reading and observation is assigned. A student-teacher thus is not confined to a knowledge of method in the department in which he is doing intensive work, but studies also the problem in all the leading branches of secondary school work—Latin, Greek, French, English, history, mathematics, physics, chemistry. Thus a broad foundation is laid for the intensive work.

Once a week also a seminary is conducted by the professor of pedagogy of Brown for the thorough study of particular subjects chosen for each quarter, thus: Herbartian pedagogy, child study (including the period of adolescence), school hygiene, educational values, etc. At the same time each student-teacher is assigned a theme for a thesis to represent careful mastery of that subject through reading, experiment, and observation. The student-teacher is expected at this point to reach the frontier of thought, and penetrate a little way, however small, into the regions of hitherto unknown truth.

The prime purpose of the high school in undertaking this work is to secure trained teachers, and raise the professional spirit of its teaching corps. The student-teachers undertake the work with the hope of securing good preparation as teachers, and good places as a result, and in this they have not been disappointed.

In their last annual report to the city government the school committee of Providence say:

The scheme has proved a valuable one both to the young teachers who themselves were gaining in the most ready and thorough way experience in teaching and to the more capable teachers of the high school, who by the necessity of explaining processes, making clear the application of principles and expounding the philosophy of education, have been obliged to render orderly and compact the principles already adopted by them for the government of their own work.

The general professional tone of the school has been improved, and it is the report of the principals of the departments that these young persons have done better work than any average teacher without experience that has been employed in our high school for many years past.

From this list of trained teachers vacancies in our schools occurring in regular positions may be filled. In this way we hope to secure a higher grade of teaching, more professional ambition, and a better adaptation to our school work than we have yet been able to do.

In presenting this article the idea is not to advocate this particular plan but to make an earnest plea for the professional training of teachers for secondary schools. Into these schools come those who are to be the leaders in thought and action in our land, and together with them the sons of the great middle class of citizens. The work is not to be done upon base metal, but upon the finest metal the minds of our country can produce. It is foolish to trust this work to the hands of unskilled workmen, to the Chinese labor of imitation. Our young high-school teachers, untrained, enter upon their work with enthusiasm; they are men of scholarship and character, but in almost every instance their methods are determined by the methods of that teacher who in preparing them for college impressed them most; they are about eight years behind the times. Their memory of methods into the rationale of which they were never inducted is dim and superficial. With their bright hopes and aspirations unguided they soon, in too many cases, suffer arrested growth and fall into the humdrum of mechanical teaching. The four walls of the schoolroom are as opaque to their spiritual as to their physical vision. Teaching becomes distasteful to them; a mere form of money getting; they become mental dyspeptics, and if physical dyspepsia is not contagious, spiritual is certainly most virulently so. God pity the pupils. What we need in our high schools is men-makers; teachers with the highest conception of their calling; men who will look upon it as a life-work because of the great amount of good in the world they can accomplish. Does it demand sacrifice? The noblest will sacrifice the best for a noble work. Does society look with distrust upon the practical wisdom of the teacher? Let the teacher be worthy of trust and it will be granted him. Is teaching not numbered fit to be named with the honored trinity of professions? It has been the teacher's fault. They have outstripped

him in the race. Let the license to teach, as it was the first degree to be conferred by a university, be the most honored. The field is ripe for reaping. It is the consensus of opinion that teaching ought to be a profession; that its work in importance is second to none; that while the other professions restore—medicine to health, law to justice, theology to righteousness—teaching is the science by which evil is anticipated by prevention; by which the bad never exists, because of the development of the good. Of all the imperative needs of education today the need of leaders is the greatest. If we cannot be leaders ourselves let us train those who shall be leaders, that by the strength of our purposes and through our labor and toils education may be exalted upon that throne of honor to which all with spontaneous edict declare her entitled.

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